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# Victory's Price













RAYMOND LAWRENCE NICHOLS  
1899-1918.

# Victory's Price

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By

William Newton Nichols

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Madison

1918

PS 3527  
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1918

To my son,

RAYMOND LAWRENCE NICHOLS

Co. G, 127th Infantry, 32d Division,

American Expeditionary Forces,

who died for Liberty

August 3d, 1918, near Fismes, France,

at the victorious close of the

Second Battle of the Marne;

and to his comrades

“Les Terribles”

who lie in the shell-riven fields  
of France.

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**“They have not died in vain!”**

THE MIDDEN-HEAP

(Sept.-1914.)

Tools of the Giver of Thought are we  
formed each to carve a line,  
Base or noble as the great God wills  
to fit His plan divine;  
Aught of the meaning shall we e'er  
know, aught grasp of His design,  
Its pattern wrought with craftsman's  
hand, set mete, and sacred sign.

Handfuls of dross-spoilt ore were we  
He gathered where it lay,  
Buried since the Dawn beneath the  
earth and covered with foul  
debris;  
By fire and fan He purged us, till,  
freed from the cumbering clay,  
Tools well-tempered we wait till He  
needs our strength in His day.

Ever on high among the nations His  
twin Colossi stand,  
Fair Justice and Law, the great crea-  
tions of His all-skilled hand;  
Battered and bruised, o'er hill and  
vale, scattered through every  
land  
Lie the bones of those who were His  
tools, tombed but by the drift-  
ing sand.

Battered and scattered by Memnon's  
shrine lie the tools the carver  
cast,  
Used and broken but the midden-  
heap may give them rest at last;  
Yet the thought that flowed through  
the chisel's point, all the strength  
in the mallet massed,  
Still endures, when as a God 'tis a  
memory of the Past.

And the thought that swayed each  
warrior's sword, all the lore the  
scholar had,  
The song that swept the lyre's  
strings, made men be valorous,  
joyous, sad,  
The purpose we toil for, the sage's  
dream,—even when all are  
dead,—  
Shall live while they give aid to men,  
or sweeten the bitter bread.

## ODIN'S CALL

(Aug.-1914.)

Ho! Arm ye quick my Heroes,  
For Ragnarok is come!  
Far borne o'er Niord's billows  
Echoes the cannon's drum!

Lo! Now's the day,—the mighty  
Day I dreamed of yore, when  
Amid the Halls Immortal  
I saw the Cause,—and End!

Valhalla's doors are open,  
Valkyries sweep the plain,  
To choose for Fame Eternal  
My Heroes 'mid the slain!

•

Then fight ye well my Chosen,  
Though Loki lead their host;  
Nor fear ye Dwarf nor Giant,  
Nor Kingship's unlaid ghost!

For out from all the turmoil,  
The slaughter and the wrong,  
I see emerge the Future,  
A new Race,—a new Song!

## A PALADIN OF FRANCE

(Aug.-1914.)

Above fair Brussels the white clouds lie,  
Like bales of snow-white wool they float by,  
Borne Rhine-ward by the cold wind from the German Sea;  
A thunder crash shakes the vaulted blue,  
A mist of men and iron downward spew,  
An eagle screams above the cloud in battle glee;  
"Garros for France!" peals the warrior cry,  
As down the lanes of battle dash the chariots of the sky!

## THE DAWN OF WAR.

(Oct.-1914.)

Apart He rolls the grey-toned curtain of the Elder World,—  
The misty, fog-blown vail that Time had wrought to hide the Past,—  
And from out the vast Unknown, a dire tempest whirled,  
The myriads of the Slavs pour forth, God's fierce, scourging blast:

Stagnant, vexed with old corruptions,  
    lay the king-ruled lands;  
Priests and nobles, in vice and sloth-  
    ness, dyed their hands  
In Man's blood; and of his wretched-  
    ness made sport;—  
Then Lo!—amid the flames of battle  
    perish priest and court!

Beneath th' cannon's iron hail their  
    age-old cathedrals fall,  
Their wooded parks are swept away,  
    their fortresses, aged, strong,  
Their museums, their works of Art,  
    their stately church spires tall,  
All have perished—for they were  
    builded on the quick-sands of  
    Man's wrong!

Note—The Prussian is not a true German,  
but a Slav cursed with a veneer of Teutonic  
Kultur.

### THE GOD OF WAR.

(April—1915.)

O Galilee! the blood of men  
In torrents pours on every field  
Of all the lands that to Him yield  
Worship,—who walked thy beaches  
    then:

Then, when thy storms obeyed His  
    will;  
Then, when His voice bade them be  
    still;

Then, when He spake from the  
fisher's boat,—  
Pilloved His head on the fisher's  
coat:

Now the kings cry for him to shed  
Man's blood—He who for Man once  
bled;  
In His loved name cry woe and hate,  
Leave the ravished to the wolves—  
and Fate!

O Galilee! Once thou meant peace!  
Once by thy marge we met a Friend,  
Once with Him conversed at day's  
end,  
Once found with Him of earth sur-  
cease;

Yet, if these who now chant His  
name  
'Neath Gothic spire or Russian dome,  
Singing His praise for war's red  
fame,  
Praying within some ruined home,

Giving Him thanks who them has  
blessed—  
If these be His true priests,—ah, then  
Ne'er was He the Friend whose  
footsteps pressed  
Thy marge;—nor His love Man's  
desired end!

## ATTILA.

(Sept.-1915.)

Great God of our fathers! Shall we  
endure  
The scorn of the Goth? let him sleep  
secure  
While the blood of our men, our  
women, our babes,  
Red dyeing the seas slakes the lust  
he craves?

Aye craves! An Attila sits on his  
throne,  
Who weighs not Man's life, loves the  
myriad groan  
Of the wounded who line the tor-  
ture fields,  
Who gives armed men Belgian babes  
for shields!

O God! Lift the cup full-brimmed  
to his lip!  
May he live to see power from his  
fingers slip;  
May he die the death Thou gavest to  
Cain,—  
Or rot in a mad-house with crazed  
brain!

## THE DREAM OF KAISERS TWO.

(Nov.-1915.)

Two Kaisers there were that  
dreamed  
That they should rule land and sea,  
Two peoples there were they deemed  
Bound fast to their axle-tree;—  
Ah me! the woe of that dream!

Then first, from the high-borne  
clouds,  
Men rained Jove's fierce lightning  
down;  
Then first, from the vault of Night,  
Fell fire on the sleeping town;  
Then first men scanned the heavens,  
Whence Christ in His glory rose,  
In fear lest, 'mid moonbeams hid,  
Darksome shapes, abhorrent, poise!

Lo! By day the planes are flitting.  
Lo! by night the Zeppelins come;  
And the cannon, mountain-splitting,  
Drown the note of fife and drum;—  
    Ah me! the world harks to that  
        drum!

League on league, from sea to sea,  
Lie the rotting frames of men;  
League on league but burnt rafters  
Mark the homes where love was  
    then;  
Broken cannon, shattered entrench-  
    ments,  
Ruined fields and shot-torn woods,  
Blood-dyed streams and gaping  
    hedges  
Over which stern Memory broods;—

Lo! the glory of the battle!  
—A woman's hair,—a child's  
    rattle;—  
And, crushed amid his meek milch  
    cattle,  
A peasant nigh his hut of wattle!—  
    Woe me! The reaping of their  
        dream!

## THE KAISER'S DREAM.

(Sept.-1916.)

Where should a Caesar bear his sway,  
Save where, by its winding pathway,  
The golden Tiber seeks the sea?  
Save where, by Naples' bay of blue,  
With tresses dark—the raven's hue,—  
The laughing maidens in wild glee  
E'er dance, and glance through lashes long,  
Or sing at eve Santa Lucia's song?  
  
Let my footsteps but lead to Rome,  
And 'neath Saint Peter's arching dome,  
I'll rear a throne  
Of Empire that for all my toil,  
War's tumult, horror, grimy moil,  
E'en Verdun's futile bloodshed shall atone!

## THE DAWN OF FREEDOM.

(March-1917.)

Great Ragnarok indeed was come:  
From Pole to Pole thundered the drum;  
Cathay and Ind their broad war-banners fly;

All Peoples moved their armies forth  
At battle's call;—no more was mirth  
In any land;—none heard the  
widows' and the orphans' cry.

Then lo! The Dawn of Freedom  
breaks!  
Across the wide Slavic plain shakes  
The retreating banner of age-  
crowned Might;  
The kings tremble, as their high  
thrones,—  
Once set on skulls and rotting  
bones,—  
Topple, and their glory dies into  
night.

The right of lords to grind the  
serf?—  
'Tis gone! And no more the green  
turf  
Is reddened by the despairing  
patriot's blood;  
Against the foe, whose German boast  
Claimed earth as campus for their  
host,  
Free men now pour,—a martial  
flood.

## THE MEN OF 1917.

(May-1917.)

His fathers wore the blue,  
He wears the khaki-brown;  
They knew the freedom of the seas,  
the woods,—  
He but the streets of paved town;  
And yet, on History's high roll, his  
fame  
Will march with grandsire's storied  
name:

Theirs the rude courage from out-  
door life,  
Where contest with the moods of  
Nature gave them strength  
To meet all stress;—his that of the  
cultured brain,  
That taught, dares any length,  
Or height, or depth, that leads last  
To the desired goal, when the toil is  
past:

Each to his country's need freely  
gave all;  
Nor held him back from anything  
Whereby his Nation should grow  
great,  
And that to his sons should liberty  
bring;  
Nor cared he for self, whether the  
tossing sea  
Or whispers 'mid the pines should  
his requiem be.

## MARCH AWAY.

(July-1917.)

March away! March away!  
Eager, longing for the fray,—  
Longing for the coming day  
When against the German might  
Storm our legions for the Right.

Ah! German Rhine! Thy waters  
yet  
Shall run with blood; nor e'er forget,  
Though long thy sons weep with  
regret,  
That each corse sowed in Belgic field  
Did hundred-fold of harvest yield.

March away! March away!  
Though your hair turn to gray;  
Freedom heard you cry "Aye!"  
When she called against the Hun  
Men fearing nought 'neath the sun.

O'er Prussian plain your banners fly;  
Let Hartz echo the defeated's sigh;  
Hohenzollern's black eagle die  
When o'er Black Forest's shaded  
gloom  
Our banner crowns its Empire's  
tomb.

March away! March away!  
Come back garlanded with the bay;  
Come you as come you may,—  
Still our hearts long for you  
'Neath the stars and falling dew.

## THE CHARIOTS OF THE AIR.

(Aug.-1917.)

Bold was the man who first would  
drive  
The chariot of Apollo,  
But bolder yet the men who strive  
For the eagle as their fellow;  
That, soaring far above the world,  
Beyond the thunder-riven cloud,  
They'd battle there in tempest  
whirled,  
Where none could hear their cannon  
loud.  
Buried far in the depths of space,  
Beyond all straining human eyes,  
They dash, they soar, they upward  
race,  
Far swifter than the condor flies;  
Till, hurtling down, a thing of flame,  
A darting flash of death and hate,  
'Neath crumpled wings and twisted  
frame  
Lies the corse of him who met his  
fate,  
While, high above the eagle, flies  
Its engine's roar its battle cry,  
The victor's chariot onward hies  
To seek a foe hid in the sky.

## WAKE!

(Aug.-1917)

Sons of your fathers! Wake! The  
dawn is nigh!  
A glory in the heavens shake your  
banner high!  
High o'er the nations, a shield for  
the free,  
Menace of fate for those who hate  
democracy,  
Symbol of peace to those who cease  
from strife,  
Symbol of hope for those who  
grope amid the dust of life,  
Star-studded blue, the sky's own  
hue, its field uprear,  
Snowy bars, blood-dyed scars encirc-  
cle near;  
Then high, high, rear it high! to  
all a sign,  
Set foremost in the world's great  
battle line,  
That ye are sons of those who shed  
their blood  
To stem the war-borne tide of  
slavery's cruel flood.

## THE REFUGE.

(Sept.-1917.)

Within the shadow of the flag they  
rest secure,  
Your mother dear, your sister sweet,  
your sweetheart pure;  
No foul German beast, no vile wolf-  
ish, grinning Hun,  
Shall e'er affright those sheltered  
'neath its folds outflung!

The Belgic fields are trampled down,  
and red with mire,—  
Mire of human clay! all that bomb  
and Hun-set fire  
Can do is done; trembling, weeping,  
through the ruins stalk  
The shades of those who once the  
village street were wont to walk:

Raped, and tortured, starved and  
beaten, as their oppressors will;  
Broken, sodden, past entreating, en-  
vyng those they kill;  
So the ghosts of maidens pass,  
where upon their village green  
Olden sunsets brought fair lasses  
dancing o'er the scene!

In far lands our flag has flown, it's  
waved in many a breeze,  
It's soard above the crested snow,  
it's rippled 'neath the cocoa  
trees;  
But never since it broke the bands  
that bound the Afric slave,  
Has it sheltered aught beneath its  
folds save the freedom that God  
gave!

Then spread its sheltering folds  
broad, a shield above fair  
France,  
A message of hope to Belgic eyes,—  
the pennon of God's lance,—  
The lance that yet shall strike to  
earth the demon with his  
crown.  
The flag whose glories yet shall fill  
the world with its renown.

Beneath its folds all nations shall be  
one and free;  
Nor any race, nor creed, know aught  
but liberty;  
There none shall domineer, there  
none shall bow as slave;  
Its folds shall be each woman's  
glory, its stars all men crave!

"SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE."  
(Nov.-1917.)

"Somewhere in France!" in death's  
cold trance,  
He sleeps the soldier's long, last  
sleep;  
And o'er that mound-strewn battle  
ground,  
Dee weeps,—while the green ivies  
creep  
To lay their garlands on his grave,  
That final bivouac of the brave,—  
"Somewhere in France!" "Some-  
where in France!"

By Ancre, Somme, or grim Verdun,  
On Ypres' plain, or Vimy's hill,  
Where, though cannon crushed and  
bayonet thrust,  
Britain's banner flies proudly still,  
There "over the top" our Yanks  
they go,—  
Because their bold hearts will it so,  
"Somewhere in France!" "Some-  
where in France!"

God speed the day that sees our flag,  
Though battle-torn to but a rag,  
Lead o'er the crest, on to the Rhine,  
Through storm of shell and bullet  
whine,  
Our own brave men,—that when  
they fall  
They'll hear above them their own  
bugle call!—  
"Somewhere in France!" "Some-  
where in France!"

FRANCE-BOUND.

(Feb.-1918.)

Thou, my birth-land,—fast-fading  
land,  
That in my dreams I'll see;  
Thou fair land where my longing  
heart  
Will ever, ever be;  
My birth-land, my home-land,  
Land by the blue lake's lea;  
My birth-land, my home land,  
Shall I thee ever see?

Thou far-off land, thou dear dream-  
land,  
Land of the heart's delight,  
Thou land which fond memory's sun  
Forevermore makes bright;  
Land where I, with heart free  
From all of care and care,  
Unknowing weariness  
Dreamed love immortal there.

Ah, thou fond land! O thou loved  
land!  
Land where with friends I'd roam,  
Through that fair land, ever-blest  
land,  
My own beloved home;  
Where never was harshness,  
Nor man made man to moan,  
Where dreaming nought evil  
I reaped the joy I'd sown:

Thou, my home-land, ever dear  
land,  
Land where my loved ones dwell;  
O my home-land! O my fond-land!  
'Twixt us the long leagues swell!  
In that far land, loved land,  
There would I ever be,  
Yet my eyes may but thee  
Through love's memory see!

Till that great day at last shall  
come,  
That brings us to our own,  
When all who loved again shall  
greet,  
Nor find, then, olden grown,  
Those they loved upon earth,  
Those whose fond lips they've  
known,  
The souls, the scenes, their starry  
flag  
By Heaven's own breezes blown:

And till that day we'll fight the fight,  
That man must fight to win,  
To gain for self, and for his race,  
Triumph o'er Death and Sin;  
To put the Right above the Wrong,  
Help the fallen, raise up the weak,  
With the pure crush the foul,—  
Be brave, be just, be meek!

## FROM SHANNON'S SIDE.

From wide Shannon and from fair  
Clyde,  
From by the Foyle and storm-vexed  
Moyle,  
From winding Swilly's land-locked  
side,  
From all of Erin's grey-blue loughs,  
From Mask and Corrib and Lough  
Ree,  
From Derg and Erne and far Lough  
Veagh,  
From where Killarney's mild blue  
wave  
Its castled ruins reflect and lave,  
From where 'neath Corkonian  
boughs  
Lee hears the bells of Shandon toll,  
From all her isles in all her seas  
Eirne's hero-sons greet the battle-  
breeze!

Their dead they cover Vimy's ridge,  
They clog the trenches in Flemish  
fields,  
They've crossed the Somme by pon-  
toon bridge,  
They've made their bodies living  
shields,  
Their hundred thousands heard the  
call  
As did the men of Fontenoy,  
And gay and free up-answered all,  
Not one who lagged, to honor coy,  
But bold they hurtle on the foe,—  
For France had called!—and they  
must go!

## FRANCE.

(May-1918.)

O thou bleeding heart of France  
Take new courage through the night,  
On your clustered standards glance  
The first rays of coming light;  
Dark the storm and drear the night,  
Lashing, crashing, fell the iron hail;  
Raged the demons in their might,  
Rose on high the women's wail;  
Slaughtered babes lay in your  
streets,  
Grandsires hoary in their blood,  
Fire fell from heaven in blazing  
sheets,  
Gas poured its death-whelming  
flood;  
Yet through all true to yourself,  
True to your heroic past,  
Recking not of life or pelf,  
Staking all on one bold cast,  
So you stood firm at Verdun,  
As you'd turned them at the Marne,  
To your battered ramparts clung,  
Heaped the Huns a battle-cairn;  
Now, O France, our legions come,  
As thine came once to our aid,  
And through gas and crashing bomb  
Dash our manhood, unafraid;  
Ours now let the burden be,  
On us now let it be laid,  
We who first knew Liberty  
Ours the task of Orlean's Maid!

## THE HUNS.

(May—1918.)

Stark, against the reeling sky they stand;  
Fierce-eyed, grimy, spectres of the deep;—  
The Deep of Hell! Lowest of the Pit!  
Beasts whom e'en Satan could not endure!  
They pour their torrent across the Flemish land,  
They leave behind but ruins where women weep,  
They desecrate the church with obscene wit,  
They torture and they ravish, within their might secure!  
Lo! Ruin marks their pathway!  
Lo! Terror runs before!  
The shadow of their ranks of gray  
Casts its horror on each cottage door!  
No grain grows in the fields they pass,  
No fruits on any bough,  
Shattered walls rise amid the grass,—  
Filth-fouled altars where no knee may bow!

## THE GOAL OF DESIRE.

(Aug.—1918.)

They sing as they enter the trenches,  
They sing in the zone of fire,  
They sing as they storm from the  
trenches,—  
For they have reached the goal of  
desire,—

The goal of their high, fond desire,  
The goal to which their hearts proud  
aspire;—  
Their hearts which no marching  
could tire,—  
That goal—the baptism of fire!

Singing their brown lines go for-  
ward;  
And there the Huns' rush is stayed;  
Singing they drive up the long  
slopes  
Till the Black Eagle in dust is laid:

Yea, Prussia's Black Eagle is trail-  
ing,  
Trailing in the mud of the Marne,  
And the dead of their hosts is  
heaping  
A greater than Aix's battle-cairn!

But the boys who passed down our  
streets,  
Smiling with May and the morn—  
They are the ones who now singing  
Have smitten the Prussian to scorn:

And the goal of their fond desire  
They have gained through sleet and  
storm,  
As through the hells of gas and  
liquid fire  
They dash to guard France the For-  
lorn.

#### WISCONSIN'S HEROES.

(Sept.—1918.)

On the slope of a wood in France  
they lie—  
Face to the sky, face to the sky,  
The winds blowing over them softly  
sigh,—  
“Not in vain they die!” “Not in  
vain they die!”  
“These young heroes who came  
across the sea,  
From the Land of the Free! From  
the Land of the Free!  
To battle for France and world-lib-  
erty,  
Heroicly! Heroicly!”

Through all years to come will their  
faces shine,  
In glory sublime, in glory sublime;  
And wreaths immortal forever will  
twine,  
In Heaven's clime, in Heaven's  
clime,  
O'er their brows that the great sac-  
rifice have made,—  
Who their lives have laid, who their  
lives have laid,  
A free-will offering on Freedom's  
shrine,—  
To the end of Time, to the end of  
Time.

The grief from our hearts it will  
pass away,—  
With the seasons' sway, with the  
seasons' sway;  
But their glory shall ne'er dim or  
decay,—  
In our hearts alway, in our hearts  
alway;  
But shall clearer shine as the years  
go by,—  
The years that try, the years that  
try;  
And their faces will greet us bye  
and bye,  
When the end is nigh, when the end  
is nigh.

## VICTORY'S PRICE.

(Sept.—1918.)

Ah, it's glorious to see the flag advance  
Where the death-driven devils of battle dance;  
Ah, it's glorious to hear the victor's cry  
Where the Prussian lies prone  
neath the flame-riven sky;—  
But my laughing boy—he will come ne'er more  
From the shell-riven hell of far-away France!

Ah, it's great to hear the high bugles crying  
When the broken foe in wild terror's flying;  
Ah, it's great to see hope and joy re-light  
As through the vales of France goes our banner bright;  
But my laughing boy—he will evermore  
On the flame-stricken slope in France be lying!

Ah, it's proud I am that in carven  
brass,  
With the tattered ensigns glowing  
beneath the glass,  
That his name will stand with his  
comrades true  
'Neath the Capitol's dome all the  
centuries through;—  
But my laughing boy,—he will  
come ne'er more  
With the flowers of spring and  
the swift-greening grass!

Ah, my heart will fly at each mo-  
ment's chance,  
When e'er through the window I  
may eastward glance,  
To a wooded slope where machine-  
guns flame,  
Where the Sons of Wisconsin carved  
their "Terrible" name;—  
For my laughing boy,—he will lie  
e'er more  
On that blood-soaked field in far-  
distant France!



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